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MM54  
R573

DEATH

OF THE

RT. REV. BENJAMIN CRONYN, D.D.,

BISHOP OF HURON.

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THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED THEREBY AND ADDRESSED TO HIS  
FLOCKS AT VITTORIA AND PORT RYERSE,  
1st October, 1871,

BY THEIR PASTOR,

R. V. ROGERS, M.A.

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KINGSTON:

PRINTED AT THE DAILY NEWS OFFICE.  
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## SERMON.

*II. Kings ii, 11-12.*

"All these things happen'd to them for examples."—I Cor. x., 11.

"Whatsoever was written aforetime, was written for our learning."—Rom. xv., 4.

The volume of the book of God's mind is constantly unrolling itself, and pointing to by-gone events, as a lesson, and illustration of what is passing around. In looking among the records of God's past dealings with His Church and people, I know none fuller of teaching than that, to which I am asking your attention. There seems to me a striking analogy between the events of that day in Israel, and this day in the Diocese of Huron.

Then the Head was removed from the Body of the Prophets, and a Church mourned his ab-

A faithful servant was honoured by separation from the scene of his labours and trials, and called to rest.

It is even so now. For, though no "chariot of fire and horses of fire," in testimony of His Master's approbation, are sent to carry our late revered Head to his home, yet, the principles of his faith, "the man and his communications" for many a long day, are proof to us clear as eye-sight, that "an abundant entrance has been administered" to Benjamin Huron "into the everlasting Kingdom of God's dear Son!"

As then, so now, "great searchings of heart" prevail among those who love God's cause above all other, as to the future. It was a dark day in Israel when the Master was taken away from the headship of the Church. The Church was not so with God, as God's cause demanded. The world was in the Church. Idolatry reigned in high places. Kings and queens had forgotten their commission as nursing fathers and nursing mothers to the

Church. "The Prophets prophesied falsely ; and the Priests bare rule by their means ; and the people loved to have it so !"

Only change names, dates and places, and the history of that day is the history of this ; and of now here more truly descriptive than of our Church in this land. We can easily conceive how strange a thing the removal of Elijah must have appeared to the Church at a time when the qualifications of the aged man of God seemed so needed for the peace and prosperity of the Church, when his long-tried experience would teach, and his weight of character enforce his teaching.

God's ways were not,—are not as man's, and, therefore, he gave not,—giveth not accounts of his matters then, nor of the matter now, over which we mourn, as they did !

He bids us rest in his love for us, and the cause we have at heart : be satisfied with his dispensations ! "What thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter !"

My purpose is to draw your attention to the chief points of this history, and apply them to our present circumstances.

Three parties are introduced to our notice : The Old Prophet ; his successor ; the sons of the Prophets, the trained Evangelists, who, thereafter, were to preach, and teach, the words of the Prophets.

The first is seen full of years, wearied and care-worn, and heart-stricken, alone, in the midst of friends, craving the promised rest, taking his last ministerial journey, as he visits the school at the Jordan, at Bethel, at Jericho, giving each his parting charge.

Next, the faithful and attached servant, young and strong, and eager for God's work, undaunted by difficulties, and only waiting God's time, to do God's bidding.

And, last, the young men, whose eyes the Lord has opened to see both worlds in their true light, and whose hearts he has inclined to choose the better part, and higher work of the ministry, now fitting for their work.

A short time since, a counterpart to this picture might have been seen in our midst, but now the aged Prophet has passed off this

early stage, and the comparatively young assistant occupies the Bishop's Seat, as our acknowledged Head !

As we listen to Elisha's request, that a double portion of the gifts of the Spirit may be Elijah's legacy, we conclude well for the young prophet's future, and hope that he is the man for the day. Plainly, we say, he realises his position, and knows the power of prayer, by his asking his Master's prevaience with the Giver of every good and perfect gift for twice the zeal, twice the wisdom, twice the labours, and that he may be two-fold more useful.

Here is a beginning full of hope, and the end comes, and no one is disappointed. It was with him, as it was, and ever will be. "He that goeth forth, and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall, doubtless, come again, bringing his sheaves with him !" And so, after a ministry of more than sixty years, as Elisha closes his day, he can reckon up twice as many miracles wrought by his hands; had been more constantly among his people than his predecessor, and, therefore, a greater example, during a longer life and more extensively useful !

The mantle of the Prophet, as he ascends, coming down on his successor, is a sign of his being God's choice. With that mantle he wrought his first miracle. "Where is the Lord God of Elijah ?" and as the amitten waters parted hither and thither, they seemed to say, "He is here, still with thee; though Elijah be not here, the God of Elijah is !"

To day our Churches mourn, but not as those without hope. We weep over our loss, over him, who, after years of hard service, whilst this country was forty years younger than it is to day, has fought the fight, and kept the faith, and finished his course; and yet our tears may well be staunched.

The God of our late Bishop is here, with the Diocese he so loved, though he is taken from us !

And, a thought full of comfort it is, the prophecies which have gone before of his successor, foretell a future, at the least equally honourable, equally useful, with him who has fin-





ished his earthly ministry to enter on his heavenly ministrations.

It will be well for us to remember it is not the office, but the official, it is the Bishop, and not the Bishopric, that is to be a blessing in his day, or otherwise. Our Bishop will be to us what God makes him; and, for the most part, God the Spirit will make him what we ask him to make him. The Bishop's "heart is in the Lord's hands." (See Hos. x., 3.)

If this Diocese will that our newly appointed Shepherd shall be all that our Chief Shepherd would have him to be, all that His Spirit can make him to be, he will be so. Our resolve will place him, in faith and prayer, in His hands, who has the power to fit the instrument for His work, and so keep him in working, as to make his work a success.

We risk much of what we might have, much of what, as a diocese, we might enjoy, by forgetting that his duties and obligations, and ours, are reciprocal, and to be mutually discharged. If he is head, we are members of the body. If it be his to guide, it is ours to follow. If his office be a loving cure, our care is to sympathise with him. His office is indeed, a burthen, and our high privilege and bounden duty it is to bear the burthen, with him!

Let our Bishop confidently cast himself on the sympathies of his diocese, and let not one of his diocese ever meet him otherwise than in like spirit. I ask you always have this question before you: Is he, where he is, for himself, or for us? For us, doubtless, if we understand aright the mind of God, and the teaching of our Church.

The Church of this Diocese, like the Church in Israel, had pre-intimations of what are now events.

We, as they, found profit by obeying the Divine suggestion. Then and now the Church has verified God's word by Amos, III. 7,—  
"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets."

Scripture warrants me in saying that events, however strange and sudden, would never sur-

prise the Church and people of God, were they ever "like unto men waiting for their Lord." It is the neglect of that "more sure word of prophecy," which leads us to be unready for any event.

We close our eyes as the light of the Spirit shines on the sacred page, pointing out the otherwise dark future, and are justly punished for our folly by being taken unawares.

Both Elijah and Elisha were in the path of duty, both waiting for what each knew was at hand, when God's ministering spirits came down in shape as chariots of fire and horses of fire, and separated the master and his servant, leaving the one to his work, whilst taking the other to his wages.

The path of duty is the path of safety; may we ever walk in it; then come what will, all will be well!

Elisha's exclamation, My Father! My Father! expresses a strong sense of loss, as if it were irreparable, but entering at once on his work in dependance on a higher master at the first difficulty, he tests the presence of God, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" and at once the God of Elijah stands forth as the God of Elisha.

Join with me in earnest prayer, that what Elijah's mantle was to Elisha, the vacant chair of Benjamin Cronyn maybe to Isaac Hellmuth, an ever-present proof of God's choice; that though the lot was cast by the hand of man, the disposal thereof was the finger of God.  
XVI. Prov. 33.

The office of a Bishop in the Church of God is what an Angel might covet, and who is sufficient for it. God might have delegated an Archangel to the charge, and he would have failed if unsupported by the God of all grace.

In our regard for the office we are apt to forget that Bishops are men and not God, flesh and not spirit; that the treasure is in earthen vessels, and that these vessels of earth are of very different form and quality—some more and some less, mixed with the more precious metals, and yet, if they be vessels fitted for and used in the master-service

we gratefully accept and honour them, as means to convey blessings to the Church from the Fountain of all good.

From him who suffers himself to be placed as Chief Pastor over us, we have aright to expect much; but not too much. It is a place of honour which it is not wrong to covet, and yet he who should place himself there, by that very act, would prove himself unworthy of the place.

And yet, once there, the Diocese may not make his a place of thorns and snares, nor yet may the Bishop complain if he find it not a bed of roses.

For doing God's work the Bishop and his Diocese must be labourers together with God. In seed time and harvest, in summer and winter, the spirit of Boaz and his Reapers—"the Lord be with you"—"the Lord bless thee"—(Ruth ii. 4.) must be the mutual prayer each for each other, responsive expressions of the deepest interest in each other's well-being and success.

Responsibility is not alone with the Bishop—the Diocese has its duties and responsibilities. He is executive, but they are self-legislative. Together they make laws, which it is his to execute. The Church of the living God is personified, not alone, in the Bishop.

Though he is head, his Diocese is body, heart, hands, and feet. The head would greatly err should it say to the body, "I have no need of thee," and the body would equally forget itself, did it say to the Head, "I have no need of thee!" So closely joined together, as they are, no one member can suffer without all suffering with it. The Bishop could not long be ill at ease, but that sooner or later he would infect his Diocese, and the waning health of the Diocese would, in the end, sicken the Bishop.

Seldom, if ever, in the history of the Church of God, was more demanded of our Rulers, than in our day and generation. Ours is a day of activities—all is in motion. Events crowd on us, startling events, but which from their frequency, cease to startle. If our Branch of the Church is to answer the high

purpose of its glorified Head, Bishops, Priests and Deacons, and the smallest of the flock, committed to the charge of these under shepherds, must realize the peculiarity of the day.

We need no new organization, but we do need a new spirit and renewed energy. We are wise to walk in the old paths, but we must remember that the paths in which our fathers walked are not now as then, the peaceful walks of duty, the calm retreats for thoughtful preparations for coming duties and a holier, happier state.

Every day mind collides with mind, thought with thought, system with system, so that there needs in the minister, would he direct the public mind, a quickness and self-adaptation to passing thought, much akin to what we see in the driver of a locomotive. The thing to be done must be done at once, if to be done with profit. It must be done well, if done with advantage. No delay! no half-heartedness! No love of ease and self-indulgence, and when from any cause we cannot longer command the qualifications needed for the place, retirement from office, and committal to others duties to which we are no longer adequate, will best serve our churches' interest, and our own honour and peace. Places in a well-ordered, hard-working church is not for the incumbent, but the incumbent is for the place.

It is not, that all on this subject has been said that could be said, that I now draw to a close; but because I fear to weary you by saying more.

What we need to make our foregoing thoughts, purposes and put our plans into execution, is that our Church, from our bishops downwards, should be baptised of the Spirit and of Fire! I do not say that some alterations might not be improvements, but I do say that the greatest improvement would be more of Christ in the heart and life. For this we need to be poured out on all "the spirit of prayer and supplication." For our Bishops that a double portion of the gifts and graces of the Spirit may be given him, for all that



have care of souls, that they may truly please Him, whose meat it was to do the will of the Father that sent him and finish his work, for the congregations committed to their charge, that the Lord would daily add saved ones to His Church.

For this let us pray as individuals, and as parishes, whenever we meet together in the Church, in the family and in the closet. Let us have for this one day in every week, so that every member of the Diocese, though separate in body, in heart and in spirit may meet together, and so claim the promise,—“Whatsoever two, &c.,” XVIII. Mat., 19, 20. O for a more abiding, more convincing sense of obligation to our Lord and Master and only Saviour—coming from a deeper and more thorough knowledge of Him, to whom we owe all we have, and are and ever shall be. He loved us, and gave Himself for us, that we might give ourselves to Him. For us He lived and died, and revived that all should live to him.

We need to prove ourselves his—more prayer, more faith, more patience, more self-denying, self-forgetting, self-devotion, watching, waiting—looking for the coming of the day of the Son of God, and then though ours be not the chariot of fire, to convey us home, yet, “Absent from the body, we shall be present with the Lord.”







